

EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Opa-locka, FL

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Opa-locka for a Brownfields Pilot. Opa-locka was also selected to receive additional funding for assessments at brownfields properties to be used for greenspace purposes. Opa-locka (population 16,000) is 4.5 square miles and located in the Miami-Dade County Enterprise Zone. The city is composed of a 70 percent African American and 27 percent Caucasian/Hispanic population, and the mean annual income is \$15,099—the lowest in the county. Opa-locka is located minutes away from Miami International Airport, providing an opportunity for trade and commerce and attracting interested developers. However, the types of businesses that have flourished in Opa-locka have typically included automobile junkyards and scrap metal and demolition debris recovery facilities, creating environmental concerns and preventing increased growth of other businesses and industries. The city has been designated a “Front Porch Community” by the governor of Florida for recent revitalization efforts, but perceived and real contamination continue to pose barriers to its redevelopment.

PILOT SNAPSHOT **Date of Announcement:** May 2000



Opa-locka, FL

Amount: \$200,000
Greenspace: \$50,000

Profile: The Pilot targets the maximum number of brownfields sites in the brownfields redevelopment area for assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment. The Pilot will also use additional greenspace funding to perform assessments and develop cleanup and redevelopment plans to restore a potentially contaminated lot into a recreational park.

Contacts:

Public Works &
Utilities Department
(305) 953-2828

Regional Brownfields Team
U.S. EPA - Region 4
(404) 562-8661

Visit the EPA Region 4 Brownfields web site at:

<http://www.epa.gov/region4/wastepps/brownfpgs/bf.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:

<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

OBJECTIVES

The Pilot plans to conduct environmental assessments in the city's Brownfield Economic Redevelopment Area, which has been designated by the City Commission. The city has identified and categorized 23 potential brownfields sites in this area into high, medium, and low priority. The Pilot will conduct the maximum number of assessments at the high- and medium-priority sites in this area. The city seeks to spur economic development by cleaning up and redeveloping brownfields sites within the city limits. Ultimately, the Pilot will contribute to the city's overall goal to redevelop its brownfields in a way that is consistent with community involvement and input, the City Comprehensive Master Plan, and zoning.

The greenspace component involves a 4.5-acre, abandoned site in the Nile Garden section of Opa-locka. The site is surrounded by residences, offices, and educational and religious centers and was formerly a commercial nursery. The Pilot plans to work with the community to redevelop the property into a recreational park with basketball courts and a soccer field. A Phase I assessment previously conducted at the site indicates that hazardous materials—such as herbicides and pesticides—may be present onsite. The greenspace funding will provide for a Phase II assessment and, depending upon the results, may be used for redevelopment planning and geographic information system (GIS) simulation.

- Maintaining and updating the brownfields GIS database and providing comprehensive information to stakeholders using GIS; and
- Using greenspace funding to conduct a Phase II Assessment, cleanup and recreational planning, and GIS simulation.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot are:

- Conducting Phase I and Phase II Assessments at a maximum number of selected potential brownfields sites within the designated brownfields redevelopment area;
- Developing plans for cleanup and redevelopment;
- Conducting community involvement activities such as implementing programs, developing media outlets, and producing newsletters, videos, and a web site;